Community Public Water Supply Fact Sheet

What is a Public Water System (PWS)?

A public water system (PWS) means a public water supply for the provision to the public of water for human consumption through pipes or other constructed conveyances, if such system has at least fifteen (15) service connections or regularly serves at least twenty-five (25) individuals at least sixty (60) days out of a year. A public water system is either a community water system or a noncommunity water system.

Is my facility a community PWS?

If your facility serves water from a well or surface water source and has at least fifteen (15) service connections used by year-round residents or regularly serves at least twenty-five (25) year-round residents, then it is a Community PWS. Examples of Community water systems are municipal systems, mobile home parks, nursing homes, homeowners associations, detention facilities, etc.

What are the responsibilities of a community system?

It is the responsibility of all public water systems to provide safe, clean, and chemically satisfactory water for ordinary domestic consumption. The PWS is responsible for all facilities, equipment, sources, construction, operations, and maintenance that result in producing and distributing a continuous safe supply of drinking water.

What contaminants must a community system monitor for?

A Community ground water system must monitor for the following: total coliform (bacteriological), nitrate, nitrite, lead, copper, inorganic chemicals (IOCs), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), synthetic organic compounds (SOCs), and radionuclides. Total coliform can often be naturally occurring; nitrate and nitrite can be from agricultural activities; lead and copper can come from household plumbing; IOCs often appear as naturally occurring contaminants; VOCs are from gasoline and industrial solvents; SOCs include pesticides and herbicides; and radionuclides usually are naturally occurring. If a system adds chlorine to disinfect the water then they must also monitor for total trihalomethanes (TTHMs) and haloacetic acids (HAA5s). TTHMs and HAA5s are disinfection byproducts. Disinfection byproducts form when disinfectants added to drinking water to kill germs, react with naturally occurring organic matter in the water. There are different monitoring frequencies for ground water systems, surface water systems, and consecutive systems.

How often does a community system monitor for contaminants?

The frequency of contaminant monitoring is not a Aone size fits all@ initiative. Several factors must be considered in determining a public water system's chemical contaminant monitoring schedule. The monitoring frequency can vary from monthly, quarterly, or yearly. Each system's monitoring is based on population served, source water type, past detections, monitoring history, vulnerability to contaminants, and use of contaminants around the well head. The Drinking Water Branch will determine your system's monitoring frequency based on the above established criteria. To determine your exact monitoring frequency for the various contaminants, contact the Drinking Water Branch at (317) 308-3282.

What should I do if I detect a contaminant or exceed a maximum contaminant level?

If your PWS detects a contaminant or exceeds a maximum contaminant level, contact the Drinking Water Branch at (317) 308-3282 as soon as possible for further assistance. The Drinking Water Branch can provide you information on possible health effects of the detected contaminant; treatment options, example public notices, and updated monitoring requirements for your system.

What is a Consumer Confidence Report?

A Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) is an annual report for customers on the quality of drinking water provided by the community system during the prior year. CCRs are prepared by the PWS and distributed annually to all customers. Each report must be completed and delivered to customers by July 1st of every year.

Will I need a certified operator?

Yes. All community water systems are required to be under the direct supervision of a certified operator in responsible charge, certified by IDEM, and at a class consistent with the type of system.

Who do I contact if I have questions?

You should contact the *IDEM Drinking Water Branch* if you have any questions. Remember that contaminant monitoring requirements will vary from system to system. The Drinking Water Branch can provide your system with a spreadsheet detailing your minimum monitoring requirements for each compliance period. Our number is (317) 308-3282. You may also contact the *IDEM Environmental Helpline* at (800) 451-6027 and ask for extension 308-3282, or the *EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline* at (800) 426-4791. You may also visit our web site at www.in.gov/idem/water/dwb.

Other useful Fact Sheets for community public water supplies.

Community Water Systems Total Coliform Monitoring; Nitrate Monitoring; Consumer Confidence Reports; Chemical Contaminant Monitoring IOCs, SOCs, & VOCs; Lead and Copper Rule; Radionuclide Monitoring; Cross Connection; Construction Guidelines; Capacity Development; Operator Certification; The Drinking Water Branch: Who We Are And What We Do

Rule Citations

PWS regulations are in the Indiana Administrative Code (IAC) and can be found at 327 IAC 8. Drinking water standards can be found at 327 IAC 8-2. PWS construction standards can be found at 327 IAC 8-3. Certified operator rules can be found at 327 IAC 8-12. The IAC can be found by accessing our web site at www.in.gov/idem/rules.

This fact sheet is intended solely as guidance and does not have the effect of law or represent formal Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) decisions or final actions. This fact sheet shall be used in conjunction with applicable rules and statutes. It does not replace applicable rules and statutes, and if it conflicts with these rules and statutes, the rules and statutes shall control.